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Via ECFS
Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

**Re: In the Matter of USTelecom for Forbearance Pursuant to
47 U.S.C. Section 160(c); WC Docket No. 18-141; Category 1**

Dear FCC,

We need to maintain a competitive a local telephone market. AT&T service has become so poor in many areas that the only way to get reliable landline service is from alternative carriers. Further, the competitive market has proven to lower service costs by as much as 50%, and seems to be more customer oriented and responsive to needs.

These carriers need to use the excess existing copper infrastructure which AT&T seems to want to abandon. In fact, it appears that AT&T would like to exit the land line business altogether.

As a business that works with hearing impaired people I want to point out that land line service is the best form of telecommunications available for these people. If you wear a hearing aid, wireless service is just not up to the task of providing clear communications. VOIP is even worse than wireless, and these two lesser quality voice services are what the world wants to move to. Copper based land line service needs to be maintained to provide an alternative to poor quality voice service, and companies other than AT&T need to be able to provide this service so that we continue to get quality customer care.

The idea that the unused copper wire infrastructure would not be available to competitive voice and DSL providers is contrary to the way this industry has worked for the last 25 years, and must not be eliminated.

My basis for my belief in this is based on over 40 years of experience in Telecommunications. I have worked for both BellSouth (now AT&T), and Continental Telephone (now Verizon) as a systems engineer, and as an independent consultant for hundreds of other independent telephone companies, government agencies, universities, and both large and small business. I have written several text books on this subject, and I am recognized as an expert in digital voice transmission and telecommunication services. Several years ago I left the telecom industry to work with hearing impaired individuals. In this new field I have found that land line service is imperative to the communication needs of these people.

After years of trying to work with AT&T for my own local business services (voice and internet

access) I was forced to quit. There service was unreliable, overpriced, and there was no one to talk to that could help with repairs, or billing issues. The people who took these calls ultimately made things worse. Now that I have a local carrier who provides voice and internet access over the old copper from AT&T my service is very reliable, and my costs have dropped by nearly 50%. I can even read my bill, as it it clear and understandable.

Yours truly,

Andrew Kauffman
AHK & Associates telecom consulting (www.ahk.com)
and Loud & Clear Hearing Aids (helpmehearnow.com)

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